



VILLAGE OF WELLINGTON POLICY

Subject: Code of Ethics

Revision Date: 5/23/12

I. Policy

Employment with the Village of Wellington requires all employees to conduct themselves with integrity at all times; keeping in mind they are responsible to the citizens of the Village. Employment with the Village is subject to Chapter 112, Florida Statutes, and The Palm Beach County Code of Ethics, and Chapter 2 "Administration," Division 2 "Code of Ethics" of the Village of Wellington's Code of Ordinances. These statutes and ordinances set forth general standards of conduct for public employees.

To avoid a violation of the Code of Ethics, all employees must consider how an outside observer would view the situation. Employees must not misuse their public position in a manner which they know or should know will result in a financial benefit or special privilege not shared with similarly situated members of the general public. Financial benefit or gifts include any money, service, license, permit, contract, authorization, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, gratuity or any promise of any of those items or anything of value. If it appears that a Village employee, or his/her friend or relative received special treatment from the Village as a result of the relationship with the Village, such perceptions may indicate the need to evaluate whether a violation of the Code of Ethics exists.

A. Gifts

1. Village employees and members of their immediate household are not permitted to accept gifts from any person or business entity that the employee knows is subject to the Village's regulations or has a business relationship with the Village; is a lobbyist, or is a principal of a lobbyist having an issue before the Village. Gifts include anything that may be considered of economic value including money, travel, service, loans, entertainment, hospitality, items, or promises.
2. Gifts do not include de minimis items with little to no value and do not include items offered at training or conferences if included with the cost of such an event; discounts available to all Village employees; promotional items sent through the mail; samples; informational books or periodicals; gifts or food between employees; admission to Village sponsored employee events (along with associated activities, meals and giveaways); or expenditures made in connection with an event for public purpose and on behalf of the Village.
3. Gifts for public use or sponsorships for projects and programs are allowable when solicited or accepted by public employees for public purpose and on behalf of the Village, so long as the gift/sponsorship is adequately documented and an acknowledgment is sent to the donor/sponsor describing same. Samples or equipment trials may also be accepted, if for public purpose, so long as the acceptance of such items, along with its intended use is adequately documented.

B. Prohibited employment and business relationships

Village employees are prohibited from purchasing, renting, or leasing any goods, services, or real estate for the Village from a business entity in which they or another Village employee owns more than five percent interest.

Exemptions: The prohibitions against doing business with the Village and having conflicting employment shall not apply when:

1. When the business is rotated among all qualified suppliers in the Village of Wellington.
2. When the business is awarded by sealed, competitive bidding and neither a Village official or Village employee, or relative of a Village official or Village employee has attempted to persuade Village personnel to enter into the contract.

C. Outside Employment

Employees may hold outside employment as long as they meet the performance standards of their Village position and they receive advanced, written approval through their chain of command. Employees who have outside employment are required to complete an "Outside Employment Authorization" form in addition to the "Commission on Ethics Employee Conflict of Interest Waiver." Certain restrictions apply including:

1. Neither the employee nor any relative works in a Village department which enforces, oversees or administers any contract or transaction with his or her outside employer;
2. The outside employment will not interfere or otherwise impair his/her independent judgment or the performance of public duties for the Village;
3. Neither the employee nor any relative participated in determining the requirements or awarding of any contract to the employee's outside employer.
4. The employee's public job responsibilities and job description will not require him/her to be involved in any contract in any way including, but not limited to, its enforcement, oversight, administration, amendment, extension, termination or forbearance with the outside employer.
5. The employee has complied with all other Village policy requirements.

D. Required Training

1. All Village employees and elected officials will receive initial Ethics training via DVD during pre-screening and will be required to submit the signed acknowledgement form at time of hire.
2. Within 30 days of appointment, board and committee members will receive a copy of the Ethics DVD and will be required to submit the signed acknowledgement form within 30 days.
3. As part of the required training, all Village employees and elected officials must read the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics. The code is available on the Commission on Ethics website as well as in the *Ethics Pocket Guide*, published by the Commission on Ethics.

4. All Village employees and elected officials must attend mandatory annual Ethics training. The training requirement may consist of live training by Commission on Ethics staff, on-line training through use of the training video available on the Commission on Ethics website, or DVD presentation.
5. All employees, elected officials and board and committee members shall complete an approved acknowledgment form, available on the Commission on Ethics website, <http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/forms.htm>, indicating that they attended a live training, viewed the appropriate web-video, or viewed the approved DVD provided by the Commission on Ethics. Employees and elected officials must submit the signed training acknowledgment form to Human Resources for inclusion in their personnel file. Board and committee members must submit their signed training acknowledgement form to the Deputy City Clerk.

Employees may contact a member of Executive Management or a member of the Human Resources staff if they have any doubts or questions concerning the Code of Ethics. No reprisals will come from reporting suspected ethics violations unless it is determined the report was done in bad faith or maliciously. Employees found to have violated the Code of Ethics will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.